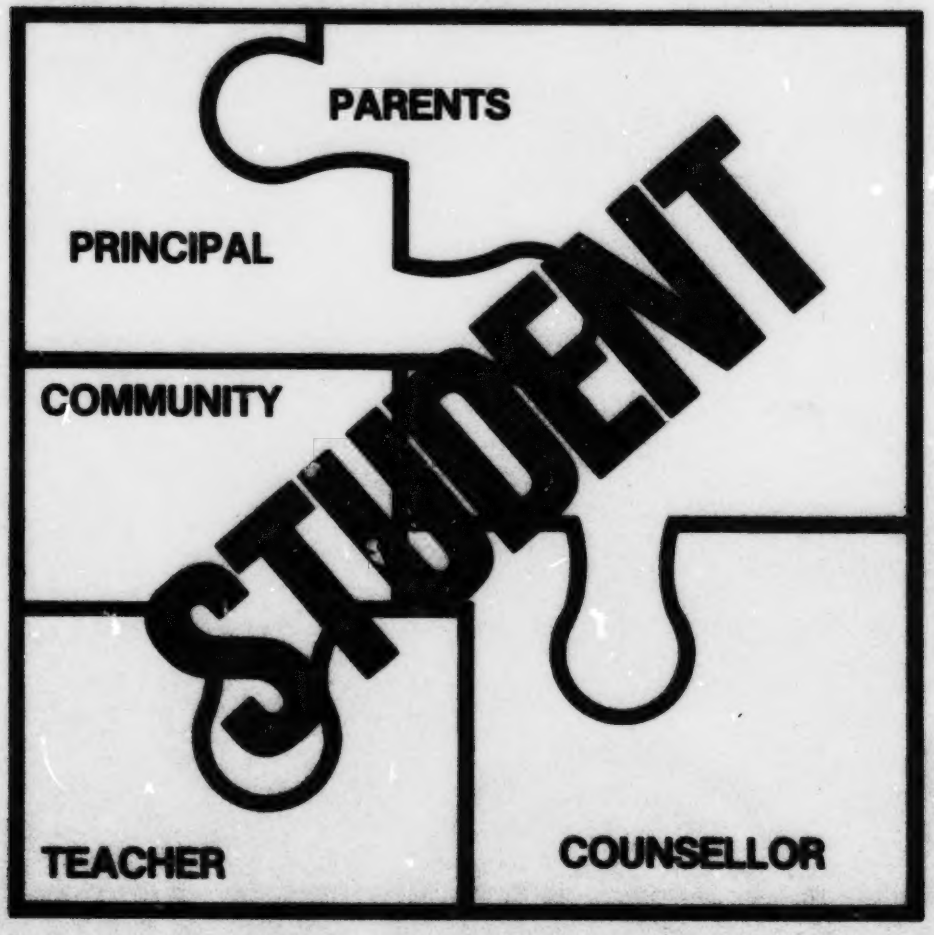
COUNSELLING FOR HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS



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COUNSELLING FOR HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS

A Manual for Use by Teachers and Counsellors
1986

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FOREWORD

This manual is designed to be used by teachers and counsellors who will be working with deaf and/or hard-of-hearing students. This interaction may occur in either a regular school classroom or in a segregated setting.

The information contained in this document is not intended to be sufficiently comprehensive and detailed enough to be used for research purposes or to make experts out of its readers. Rather, it is intended to provide functional information to teachers and counsellors who have had little or no previous experience in working with this handicapping condition, and are probably unfamiliar with the terminology which is used and with the actual mechanics involved. The wording has been kept simple and easily readable. A Glossary of Terms is enclosed to explain the few technical terms which were necessary. The reader is provided with contacts and sources of materials to facilitate the acquisition of specific information which may not be contained in this document.

For any organizations wishing to conduct in-service training sessions with staff, a suggested format and materials has been developed which contains practical suggestions and references. This inservice package is available through the Special Educational Services Branch.

The Counselling For Hearing Impaired Students manual is produced and printed by the Special Educational Services Branch of Alberta Education, 1986.

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COUNSELLING HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS

Part One Introduction

1.1 Identifying the Needs of Hearing Impaired Students

A counsellor working with students faces some difficult challenges. When those students have impaired hearing, yet another unique dimension is added to the task. Because the student may have limited hearing or no hearing at all, the counsellor will be required to adapt the approach in order to provide assistance of real value to those students.

Hearing impaired students experience a great deal of sensory deprivation because of their inability to hear or to hear well which impacts dramatically on every aspect of their lives. Many leave their home environments at an early age to attend schools where, in order to benefit from educational programs designed to meet their specific learning needs, they live in virtual isolation from the hearing world.

Other hearing impaired youngsters, integrated in regular school programs in their home communities, still experience considerable isolation from families and friends because they use a different form of communication in their lives. As a consequence, many hearing impaired children require extra guidance in the form of counselling that will not only give them further insight into the world in which they live, but provide them with additional skills to better manage their place in the world.

While many hearing impaired individuals are unable to use the spoken word as their primary mode of communication and experience language deficiencies as a result of their disability, research has found there is no relationship between intelligence and the ability to hear. The hearing impaired can and do function in the same manner as their hearing counterparts.

Counsellors can play an integral role in the educational, social and emotional development of hearing impaired students by providing support, information and guidance in the area of lifestyle management. Additionally, they have ample opportunity to dispel the myths surrounding hearing impairments in both professional and personal circles. They may be faced with new challenges in dealing with students with hearing impairments but must view the experience for what it is ... the opportunity to enhance their own skills as they make valuable contributions to the lives of others.

1.2 What is a Hearing Impairment?

There are two major categories of hearing impairment:

Hard-of-hearing is the term applied to individuals with hearing losses that range from very mild to very severe. Depending on the extent of their hearing loss, hard-of-hearing individuals may understand the spoken word, with or without the use of a hearing aid. **Deaf** is the term applied to individuals who experience hearing losses in the severe to profound range and are generally unable to hear the spoken word, though they may respond to some intense noises, such as a loud bang or a shrill siren. Deaf people may or may not wear a hearing aid.

Hearing impairments are classified according to several criteria:

1. Degree of hearing loss: mild, moderate, severe or profound.

2. Age of onset: prelingual (before the child acquired language), post-lingual (after language was mastered), or pre-vocational (before the age of 19 years).

3. Unilateral or bilateral hearing loss: Does the hearing loss affect one or both ears?

4. Site of lesion: sensorineural (damage to the inner ear), conductive (damage to the ear canal, bones or membrane) or central (damage to the central nervous system).

5. Congenital hearing loss: The term applied to a child born with a hearing impairment that may or may not be genetically linked.

1.3 Identification of Hearing Impaired Students

Children with severe to profound hearing losses are generally diagnosed at an early age. Their limited response to sound and their obvious delay in language development will usually alert their parents, doctors or other care-giving adults to the condition.

Youngsters with mild to moderate hearing losses, however, may go undetected indefinitely or may be misdiagnosed if not appropriately tested.

A hearing loss may be suspected if a child exhibits some or all of the following behaviours:*

1. Daydreams a great deal.
2. Frequently fails to answer direct questions or responds slowly.
3. Frequently asks to have words, questions or other communication repeated; uses the word "what" frequently.
4. Repeatedly demonstrates an inability to hear in a group.
5. Often frowns or leans forward when listening.

6. Holds head in unusual position when listening; for example, turns one ear toward the speaker.
7. Seems unable to distinguish where sound comes from; for example, is unsure of who in a group has spoken without visually witnessing it.
8. Demonstrates a marked change in response to sound after an illness, especially one accompanied by a high fever.
9. Omits certain sounds from speech or substitutes sounds and mispronounces simple words.
10. Has an unusually loud or weak, high or low voice.
11. Complains of "noise", such as ringing, in the ears.
12. Has a deformity or swelling in or around the ears, discharge from the ears, frequent ear aches, colds or bouts with tonsillitis.
13. Consistently withdraws from group activities.
14. Takes little interest in activities in the immediate area.
15. Hyperactive.

*Evidence of the previously stated behaviours, individually or collectively, does not necessarily indicate a hearing impairment.

1.4 Various Approaches Used in Educating Hearing Impaired Students

"Special schools" and **"special classes"** are no longer viewed as the educational panacea for disabled children, whether their disability is physical, sensory, mental or a learning disability. All young children, including those with hearing impairments, have essentially the same basic developmental needs. Additional consideration to accommodate the disability may be required.

While Alberta Education still provides The Alberta School for the Deaf in Edmonton, hearing impaired students throughout the province are being taught by a variety of methods and techniques in communities near their homes. The intent is for all students, including those at the Alberta School for the Deaf, to be integrated to some extent. The degree and type of integration varies greatly from one hearing impaired student to the next, depending on the individual student's degree of hearing loss, ability to communicate with hearing people, language and vocabulary development, general attitude and ability to benefit socially and emotionally from an integrated setting.

FULL integration occurs when hearing impaired students are able to successfully compete with their hearing peers in all aspects of the curriculum.

PARTIAL integration occurs when hearing impaired students successfully progress through parts of a school program with their hearing peers but require supplemental training in some areas, with a teacher for the hearing impaired.

NON-ACADEMIC integration allows hearing impaired students to join their hearing peers for optional classes such as art and physical education. Academic subject matter is generally taught by a teacher for the hearing impaired in either a self-contained classroom specifically for students

with hearing impairments or a resource centre designed for that purpose, within the school.

SOCIAL integration occurs when all students share assemblies, field trips and other social activities. Social integration does not always happen spontaneously; the initial implementation may be managed and guided by a skillful, caring and understanding teacher, principal, counsellor or parent.

CROSS integration is a teaching arrangement not unlike the concept of team teaching, dependent on a classroom teacher working in cooperation with a teacher for the hearing impaired to provide students with opportunities to share meaningful educational and social learning experiences.

REVERSE integration occurs when hearing students attend classes or social activities in self-contained classrooms for hearing impaired students within their own school or a regional school for the deaf. This form of integration is a good "ice breaker", an effective means of introducing integration procedures to both groups of students.

Part Two Misconceptions About Deafness

2.1 Communication

Perhaps the most significant problem faced by hearing impaired children and their families is the selection of a method of communication that will most appropriately meet the educational, social and emotional needs of the child in question. Frequently, the identification of a child's hearing loss is the first personal exposure that parents have to the world of the hearing impaired, and the long-term ramifications of the child's condition may initially be somewhat overwhelming. Parents must first gain insight into the misconceptions surrounding the implications of hearing impairments and then explore the communication alternatives available in Alberta for their hearing impaired child.

a. Language Acquisition - Most hearing children master the basic elements of their native language by the age of four. A hearing impairment does not preclude that potential, though it may seriously interrupt the process by which language competence normally develops; as a consequence, a hearing impaired child's language development may be significantly delayed in comparison to that of his or her hearing peers.

b. Reading and Writing - A further consequence of delayed language development may present itself in the form of a lower skill level in both receiving and expressing information through the written word.

c. Speech - Some hearing impaired individuals, trained in the oral-aural method of communication from an early age, prefer to use speech and speech reading as their main forms of communication. The quality of an individual's speech will vary with the degree of the hearing impairment; those individuals with some residual hearing may have well developed speech while those with severe hearing loss may have little or no speech.

d. Speech Reading - Contrary to popular belief, even the most skilled speech reader can only determine 30-40% of communication being conveyed verbally, because less than 50% of the spoken language is clearly distinguishable on the lips. Many words, with totally different meanings, appear the same (for example: read, red; cat, cot; den, don).

e. Fingerspelling and Sign Language - Fingerspelling is a system of communication which allows the user to spell out words, most frequently proper names, through a series of hand positions, each representing individual letters of the alphabet. Fingerspelling is most frequently used in conjunction with sign language (also known as manual communication), a communication system dependent on the use of hand shapes and their position on the face or body to convey spoken words. The most commonly used form of sign language in North America is American Sign Language, also known as Ameslan or ASL. Sign language syntax is somewhat different than the structure of spoken language.

f. Total Communication - A well accepted system of communication that supports the use of all communication modes to allow for maximum communication development of hearing impaired students.

2.2 Intelligence

Contrary to some popular belief, there is absolutely no correlation between hearing impairments and levels of intelligence. The public's inclination to link intellectual development with the ability to hear and speak is likely rooted in the out-dated terminology once used to describe hearing impaired individuals as "deaf" and "dumb" or "mute". Fortunately, growing public awareness and recognition of hearing impairments as communication disabilities are relegating such terms to archaic language dic-tionaries.

2.3 Cognitive/Conceptual Abilities

While hearing impairments may result in delayed language development or impaired speech and unusual syntax in the written word, there is no evidence to support the theory that the disability may result in impaired or immature cognitive and conceptual abilities. Indeed, any errors related to language usage by hearing impaired individuals are a reflection of their inability to learn language through hearing. In addition, research indicates that hearing impaired individuals have the same ability as their hearing counterparts to develop abstract thought processes.

2.4 Psychological/Mental Health

Personality patterns presented by hearing impaired individuals are essentially the same as those of hearing people. However, the psychological impact of hearing impairment cannot be ignored. Hearing impairment can alter an individual's environment to the extent that many learning situations are experienced only by those who hear. Conversely, the hearing impaired share numerous experiences unique to their condition. The incidence of severe mental health problems, such as schizophrenia, is comparable to that found in the hearing population, though the incidence of behavioral disturbances, frequently related to communication problems or neurological damage related to hearing impairments, appears to be somewhat higher.

2.5 Social/Emotional Maturity and Independence

It is a commonly held notion that many hearing impaired individuals are socially and emotionally immature. Perceived group differences in social and emotional behaviour reflect the isolation from mainstream communication experienced by the hearing impaired individual. The more skills hearing impaired persons possess to access the mainstream and the wealth of information found there, the more mature and independent they will become.

2.6 Environmental Factors

Considering the fact that a high percentage of learning is acquired through the auditory channel, it is easy to understand that the experiential base for hearing impaired children is limited. Hearing impaired children born to hearing impaired parents are less likely to feel the isolation frequently related to their impairments than their hearing impaired peers born to hearing parents. Hearing impaired parents recognize the need to expose their children to meaningful communication experiences from infancy. Hearing parents, many of whom are experiencing their first exposure to hearing impairments, may go through periods of pain, anger, denial, guilt, mourning and cure searches, unwittingly depriving their youngsters of valuable learning time.

Often hearing parents, hoping to protect their hearing impaired children from the frequently painful experiences of childhood, over-protect their children and inadvertently deprive them of experiences that have the potential to make them more fully rounded individuals.

Many hearing impaired children receive their education in special schools or programs for the deaf which, although a safe environment catering to their specific educational needs, can reinforce the isolation that stems from the hearing impairment. Hearing impaired children who remain in their homes and attend integrated programs in their communities may also experience a great deal of isolation from their families and friends because of their inability to communicate with them. Undoubtedly, the isolation imposed by their hearing impairments may be a major contributing factor to their social immaturity.

2.7 Careers

Traditionally, hearing impaired individuals have experienced a high incidence of under-employment or unemployment. Hearing impaired students, like their hearing counterparts, benefit greatly from an introduction to career planning and discussion. This is most effective when introduced at the primary school level. Like many young people hoping to penetrate the job market for the first time, hearing impaired students benefit from employment readiness training, available through a number of agencies in the province. Additionally, the hearing impaired must deal with the misconceptions and attitudes of potential employers when undertaking a job search. Please refer to pages 11, 12 and 13 of the manual, Career Development For Hearing Impaired Students. This manual may be obtained from the Learning Resources Distributing Centre, 10410 - 121 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 1L2. Phone 427-2767. After November 1986, the Learning Resources Distributing Centre will be located at 12360 - 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5L 2H1. (The phone number will remain the same).

Part Three Orientation to Hearing Impaired

3.1 Awareness of Deaf Culture

Traditionally, the word "culture" is defined as a group of individuals who share the same language, values, traditions and rules; given that definition, there is little doubt that the hearing impaired have a culture uniquely their own. Thus in addition to the hearing culture and the deaf and hearing impaired culture, a third culture is emerging. These individuals are not hearing impaired; they are the spouses or children of the hearing impaired, or the hearing impaired children of hearing parents, or sign language interpreters who may be fluent in the language of the hearing impaired but are not an integral part of the community. The third culture focuses on the strengths that the cooperating partners have to offer, rather than the weaknesses and there may be a different set of social mores in place. For example, staring is considered to be rude in the hearing culture but in this third culture, staring is an appropriate and necessary behavior. Similarly, the waving of arms, pushing or throwing objects in order to attract attention are unacceptable forms of behavior in the hearing culture, but are quite normal in this third culture. By adapting in these ways, the cooperating partners provide support, information, education and social/recreational experiences for all hearing impaired people, regardless of age, gender or degree of sensory ability.

3.2 Awareness of Hard-of-Hearing Culture

Although most hearing impaired individuals grow up in a hearing world, they have a culture and language distinctly their own. Theirs should be viewed as a parallel society, a culture that has evolved in response to the unique needs of those with hearing impairments. Hearing impaired communities throughout Canada organize and participate in their own activities; like new immigrants to this country, the hearing impaired proudly retain their cultural roots and unique identities as a vital part of their lives.

3.3 Exposure to the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Communities

a. Perhaps the simplest way for hearing counsellors to receive exposure to the hearing impaired commmunity is to make a concerted effort to seek out the hearing impaired, and subsequently communicate with them in social, non-threatening situations. In Edmonton, for example, Alberta College (10041 - 101 Street, Edmonton - phone 428-1851) and the Alberta School for the Deaf (6240 - 113 Street, Edmonton - phone 434-1481) offer educational programs for hearing impaired students who are more than willing to chat with visitors during breaks. In Calgary, the

Southern Alberta Deaf Centre, 63 Cornell Road N.W., Calgary, Alberta T2L 0L4 (phone 282-1201; TDD 282-9494) can link counsellors with hearing impaired individuals. Major colleges and universities in the province either offer courses in sign language or can assist counsellors in locating such courses in their respective regions.

b. Social/Psychological Aspects of Deafness

Few hearing people give thought to the amount of knowledge and information they acquire through their sense of hearing. Conversations overheard in washrooms, bus rides to and from school, in restaurants over cups of coffee and waiting in line for a hamburger, add to our knowledge base in the most subliminal of ways. Clearly, hearing impaired individuals do not have this advantage; the information we receive on such an informal basis must be deliberately provided to a hearing impaired student on a one-on-one basis. Obviously, under these circumstances, the potential for misunderstanding is great. One small, inappropriate or inaccurate piece of information could place the hearing impaired person in a painfully embarrassing situation.

c. Communication Skills and Training

The sooner a hearing impairment is diagnosed, the better it is for the individual concerned. Whatever mode of communication has been selected by the parents or the individual, the more quickly a training program can be implemented, and the more intense is the treatment period. This reduces the time of isolation from communication with others who share the world of the hearing impaired person. A wide variety of educational programs ranging from primary school to doctorate level programs are available. Conversely, a variety of programs available through social service agencies, colleges, and educational institutions provide training in communication alternatives for hearing individuals interested in developing skills that will enable them to communicate with the hearing impaired. Individuals interested in this area of training are encouraged to contact the Northern Education Response Centre, 6240 - 113 Street, Edmonton T6H 3L2 - phone 422-6326.

d. Technical Aids

Rapid technological advances and an increasing awareness and understanding of hearing impairments have resulted in the establishment of a new industry designed to meet the specific needs of the hearing impaired. Special telephone devices that print words rather than depending on speech, refined hearing aids that draw their energy from a tiny computer chip, and flashing or vibrating alarm systems that aid the hearing impaired in their day-to-day living have become realities rather than the mere products of good fiction. Additionally, hearing ear dogs, comparable to seeing eye dogs that assist the blind, are being specially trained to help hearing impaired individuals compensate for their inability to hear. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Northern Education Response Centre at the above address.

e. Resource Agencies

There is a variety of resource agencies scattered throughout the province that provide information and referral services not only to the hearing impaired, but to their families, friends, physicians and educators. The majority of these agencies are staffed by individuals able to communicate readily with the hearing impaired and provide Telephone Devices for the Deaf (T.D.D.) services as well. Virtually any association for the deaf and/or hearing impaired, or the Northern (Edmonton) or Southern (Calgary) Education Response Centres, will assist individuals and families in accessing programs and services for the hearing impaired. The Message Relay Centre in Edmonton (TTY-425-1231) is able to provide province-wide voice/T.D.D. service.

f. Support Services Provided By Resource Agencies

A wide range of support services for the hearing impaired and their families or friends is available in Alberta. The scope of the services varies and includes parent/child support groups and international associations for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Community-based activities are as diverse as the people they serve: Brownie/Beaver groups, cultural activities, and academic pursuits are but a few. In Alberta, the Northern and Southern Education Response Centres will provide detailed information on how to access these programs.

Part Four - Communication with Hearing Impaired Students and Their Families

4.1 Language Deficits

Not all parents with hearing impaired children are able to communicate freely with their youngsters. An important role of the counsellor is to provide information on how, where and why common language acquisition will be beneficial to both parent and child.

4.2 Family Dynamics

Often, the discovery or confirmation of a child's hearing impairment results in a series of emotional upheavals for the parents. Shock, grief, denial, guilt and shame at the pronouncement of a child's hearing impairment may, at least briefly, overwhelm the parents. The professional counsellor, recognizing that these are difficult emotions to deal with, must encourage parents to manage their own emotions in order to determine future directions for the child. The counsellor should encourage discussion about these emotions in a non-judgemental manner, providing the information that the parents may require. Counsellors with limited experience in working with hearing impaired students and their families may access additional resource information through Alberta Education; the Alberta School for the Deaf in Edmonton, or the Northern or Southern Education Response Centres.

4.3 Overprotectiveness

While it is natural for parents with hearing impaired children to experience a wide range of human emotions upon the discovery of their child's hearing impairment, counsellors must be alert to the fact that many parents will attempt to overprotect or even hide their child from a society that doesn't always understand hearing loss. Counsellors must learn to identify such parents and assist them in understanding that such an attitude will only compound the problems related to the disability and contribute to their youngster's feelings of being different.

4.4 Lack of Information About Themselves and Their Environment

Hearing impaired students must understand that mastery of their own environment is a shared responsibility with families, friends, teachers and most importantly, themselves. While guidance and support is available from those important others in the child's life, the student must come to realize that the development of critical thinking skills in order to solve problems and make reasonable decisions is an individual responsibility.

4.5 Developing Communication Strategies

1. Counsellors dealing with hearing impaired students should gain some insight into the limitations resulting from the impairment.

2. Because the counsellor's role is critical, the counsellor must examine his or her own personal attitudes toward hearing impairment. If the counsellor feels unable to perform his or her role in a professional, supportive manner, and could convey that to the student, another counsellor should be assigned. In a small school or community, another teacher, or a counsellor working in the community might be requested to take on this responsibility.

3. If the student uses sign language and the counsellor does not, the services of a qualified interpreter of the student's choice (preferably not a family member) should be utilized. Information about interpreter services may be obtained through the Northern or Southern Education Response Centres.

4. The counsellor must be sure that communication is actually taking place with the student. An awareness of body language and facial expression will assist the counsellor in determining the student's level of understanding. Counsellor and student together should list the most significant points of each counselling session, further reinforcing the clarity of the communication that has occurred.

5. Counselling hearing impaired students has two primary components: the information the counsellor provides to the student, and the information the student provides to the counsellor. It is important that students take an active role in the counselling process. An effective way of facilitating this active role is to make students responsible for obtaining specific information prior to the counselling session. This information is then brought to the session where it dramatically increases the student's involvement in the total counselling process.

Part Five Assessment and Diagnosis

5.1 Assessment and Diagnosis

1. Non-verbal or performance tests should be used to assess intelligence levels of hearing impaired students rather than more traditional tests which are dependent on language skills. Many bright hearing impaired youngsters with severely impaired language skills have been misdiagnosed because verbal tests, dependent on developed reading and writing skills, have produced invalid results.

2. Not all non-verbal tests are appropriate for use with hearing impaired students; those requiring little or no verbal direction are most appropriate.

3. Test results for preschool and early elementary hearing impaired children must be viewed with a cautious eye, as they tend to be highly unreliable. Low scores in particular should be considered questionable.

4. As with most children, hearing impaired youngsters who perform poorly during testing may have experienced any one of a number of external stressors that could have an impact on test results. Poor performance levels are an indicator that further testing is required.

5. Tests administered by individuals unfamiliar with hearing impaired children are subject to a greater chance of error than those administered by individuals familiar with hearing impairments. Fluency in manual communication is a vital skill in testing hearing impaired children who utilize sign language as their first mode of communication.

6. Untimed tests are preferable to those requiring time limits.

7. Group testing of hearing impaired children should be avoided; at best, this type of testing should be viewed as a screening device.

5.2 Academic Achievement Tests

Assessment of Hearing Impaired People, a text edited by Frank R. Zieziula, available through Gallaudet College Book Store (Kendal Green, Washington, D.C. 20002), provides specific testing techniques with an accompanying commentary on effective usage. Some of the tests recommended for use include the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT), useful in measuring basic learning skills, the Stanford Achievement Tests (SAT) that measure academic achievement and the level at which a student is working, and the Wide Range Achievement Tests (WRAT) which measure achievement levels in spelling, arithmetic and reading.

Part Six Counselling Strategies

6.1 Knowledge of Communication Skills

Counsellors working with students who are adept at speech (lip) reading should face students at a near distance, speak clearly, and avoid distorted movements of the mouth and face. It is important that counsellors avoid smoking, gum chewing and any movements that interfere with a clear view of the face, such as resting one's cheek in the hand. If a student appears to have difficulty understanding, the counsellor should re-phrase the information rather than repeat it. Pens and paper should be kept on hand for emergency purposes.

Ideally, counsellors working with hearing impaired students who use sign language as their primary form of communication should have sign language skills that enable them to work on a one-on-one basis with the student; otherwise the services of a qualified interpreter (of the student's choice) should be used.

Counsellors working with interpreters should:

- speak directly to the student at all times.
- sit next to the interpreter to allow the student a clear view of both counsellor and interpreter.
- maintain good eye contact with the student; the student may view looking away as rejection.
- be aware of the student's facial expressions, hand movements and body language; they are strong indicators of the student's level of comprehension.
- talk at a normal pace, in a natural tone of voice.
- ask, if a student is wearing a hearing aid, if voice levels of the counsellor and interpreter are at comfortable levels.
- be sure the vocabulary level used is appropriate to the student's level of understanding.
- avoid using idioms such as "That's a horse of a different color". Idioms and many slang terms used in speaking have little or no meaning to the hearing impaired and will only create unnecessary confusion.

Counsellors working with interpreters should NOT:

- ask the interpreter to edit comments: she or he is ethically obligated to interpret all spoken communication to the hearing impaired student.

- hold "aside" or private conversations with the interpreter; the hearing impaired student has the right to be privy to all conversation that occurs.

- ask the interpreter for his or her comments or opinions; the interpreter's function is strictly that of a communication vehicle in counselling sessions.

- take telephone calls during counselling sessions with hearing impaired students; the student may feel the conversation is about him or her and the interpreter is left in the embarrassing position of having to either interpret what the counsellor is saying or explain the call.

6.2 Individual Counselling

The effectiveness of one-on-one counselling with hearing impaired students is largely dependent on the student's understanding of the role of the counsellor and his or her own role as well. It is critical that counsellors be aware of the student's language level from the onset. Counsellors without manual communication skills may quickly realize their ability to assist hearing impaired students, who use sign language as their primary means of communication, will be limited to a great extent. The services of a sign language interpreter can help overcome this problem, though the sense of intimacy required to promote a warm, trusting counselling relationship may be lost.

6.3 Group Counselling

Like all students, those with hearing impairments may benefit from group counselling sessions, though the counsellor must take great care in selecting the student mix. Generally, students should be homogeneous in chronological age, background, ability level and emotional development. Counsellors working with groups of hearing impaired students should be familiar with all modes of communication and well versed in sign language to avoid the need for an interpreter for those students who use manual communication as their preferred method of communication. Again, like all students, hearing impaired students involved in group counselling need security and affection, peer acceptance and group identification, a sense of achievement and self worth, and independence within the group.

Part Seven Roles and Functions of Counsellors

7.1 Working with Hearing Impaired Students

Although counselling hearing impaired students will not alter their physiological disabilities, counselling can help them cope with many of the secondary consequences related to their disabilities, which may impact daily on their lives both in and out of the classroom.

Counsellors must recognize and gain an understanding of hearing impairments and how the deprivation of sound can alter a student's perspective. Additionally, they must be prepared to work with parents and educators, offering guidance on how they may assist the student developmentally. Counsellors also must be prepared to make appropriate referrals when required, assist in classroom placements, and provide additional information the student might require. Counsellors of hearing impaired students have a central role in liaising with other professionals such as psychologists, physicians and speech therapists.

7.2 Familiarity with Communication Skills

In addition to gaining an awareness and understanding of the numerous communication alternatives used by hearing impaired students, counsellors may wish to learn sign language in order to communicate freely with those hearing impaired students who use it as their first means of communication. The manual alphabet is easily mastered; signs representing words, phrases and concepts are more difficult but can be learned with practice.

When dealing with students who prefer speech as their first mode of communication, counsellors must understand that even the most articulate of hearing impaired students may have tones and inflections that differ greatly from the speech of hearing people. By simply allowing the student to speak uninterrupted for several minutes, the counsellor will become attuned to speech patterns and rhythms.

In all counselling situations with hearing impaired students, counsellors and students together should highlight, in writing, the key points of the counselling session.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATING TO STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

TERMS RELATED TO HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

Adventitiously Deaf (postlingually) - A child or adult who loses hearing through illness or accident after normal language and speech patterns have been established.

Air Conduction - The process by which sound is conducted to the inner ear through the air in the outer ear canal, causing vibrations in the ear drum (tympanic membrane) and ossicles (bones in the middle ear) to make fluids in the cochlea receive the vibrations, stimulating the auditory nerve.

Audiogram - A graph that provides a visual depiction of the range of hearing; levels are recorded in decibels (loudness) for each frequency (pitch) tested.

Audiology - A profession that involves the science of hearing and the measurement of hearing responses.

Audiologist - An individual, qualified in the area of audiology, able to determine hearing levels, test auditory skills and make recommendations concerning the use of a hearing aid and training.

Audiometer - An instrument used to determine hearing sensitivity and test auditory skills.

Bilateral Hearing Loss - Hearing loss that affects both ears.

Bone Conduction - The process by which sound is conducted to the inner ear through the cranial (head) bones.

Communication Approaches - The alternative methods and modes of communication available to hearing impaired children and their families, generally selected on the basis of educational goals and the child's functional communication ability. The alternatives include: Auditory Approach, Auditory-Oral Approach, Cued Speech, Oral Approach, and Total Communication. A detailed explanation of each approach is available at the end of this section.

Conductive Hearing Loss - Reduced hearing resulting from the outer and/or middle ear's inability to adequately allow sound to enter the inner ear. This type of hearing loss is generally related to a correctable medical condition.

Congenital Hearing Loss - (prelingually) A hearing impairment which exists at the time of birth.

Deafness - There is no commonly accepted definition of "deafness"; hearing impairments tend to be categorized by degree of hearing loss and, to a lesser extent, by the mode of communication used by the individual with the hearing impairment. Educators lean toward a definition that considers the functional level of the student while medical and audiological specialists base their definitions on the results of technical auditory examination and testing procedures.

Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Specialist - A medical doctor who specializes in diagnosis and treatment of ear, nose and throat conditions.

Hearing Impairment - The term hearing impairment is widely applied to virtually any degree of hearing loss. Often the term is viewed as interchangeable with deafness, though generally speaking a deaf student is one whose hearing loss precludes an understanding of speech through audition alone, with or without a hearing aid. A hard-of-hearing student is generally viewed as one whose hearing is sufficiently impaired to make difficult, but not impossible, an understanding of speech through audition alone with the use of hearing aids. A prelingual hearing impairment is present at birth or occurs prior to speech and language development. A postlingual hearing impairment occurs after the spontaneous acquisition of speech and language. To a great extent, the quality of a hearing impaired individual's speech is determined by the degree of his or her hearing impairment.

Interpreter/Tutor - Through the use of sign language, an interpreter transmits spoken communication to the hearing impaired student and reverses the process by verbalizing the hearing impaired student's responses to hearing individuals. Educational interpreting may extend somewhat beyond the traditional role of the interpreter, who may take a tutorial role, assisting the hearing impaired student with educational assignments outside the classroom setting.

Itinerant Teacher - A visiting teacher who provides tutoring, resources, and information for the integrated hearing impaired student; the itinerant teacher works in consultation with school personnel and parents of the hearing impaired student.

Mixed Hearing Loss - A combined conductive and sensorineural hearing loss.

Sensorineural Hearing Loss - A type of hearing loss caused by damage to the cochlea (sensory portion) and/or auditory (neural) nerve of the inner ear. Although this damage may involve the cochlea, nerve or both, this form of hearing loss is often referred to as nerve deafness.

Speech Audiometry - A means of testing a hearing impaired individual's detection and understanding of speech.

Speech Clinician - A professional who assesses, diagnoses and remediates communicative disorders involving expressive and receptive language skills.

Speech Reading - Frequently referred to as lip reading, speech reading is the developed ability to read speech patterns. This technique includes the use of non-verbal clues, such as facial expression, body language, and gestures that individuals use to reinforce their spoken communications.

Teacher Of The Deaf (Or Hearing Impaired) - A hearing or hearing impaired teacher who has specialized in the provision of educational programs for students with hearing impairments.

Threshold - The minimum stimulus required to produce the detection or reception of a given sound.

Unilateral Hearing Loss - A hearing impairment that affects only one ear.

COMMUNICATION

Auditory Approach - This communication approach is used with many hearing impaired children, regardless of the extent of their hearing loss. It is based on the premise that hearing impaired children can learn to listen; to hear, and to develop speech and language by means of the auditory channel. The primary objective of this approach is to integrate auditory skills in the total personality of the hearing impaired child. The emphasis is on maximizing the child's residual hearing without the use of visual cues.

Auditory-Oral Approach - A combination of the auditory approach described above and the oral approach, described later in this section.

Cued Speech - Cued speech is visual representation of the spoken language, illustrating to the hearing impaired child the sounds that can't be heard. Dependent on the use of eight hand shapes that represent consonant sounds and four positions that represent vowels, the student must use the information provided by the shape of the hand, the position of the hand in relation to the face, and the shape formed by the speaker's lips to receive the information.

Oral Approach - As the term suggests, the emphasis on this communication approach is placed on audition, speech reading, and talking. There is an expectation that hearing impaired children will learn to talk and understand the spoken word through extensive oral training.

Total Communication - This system of communication places emphasis on all forms of appropriate approaches to oral, manual (sign language) and auditory training. The primary objective is to equip the hearing impaired individual with as many alternatives as possible to communicate effectively with and among hearing and hearing impaired individuals.